TRANSGENDERING,
MEN, AND MASCULINITIES

RICHARD EKINS

Dave King

In 1961 Lou Sullivan was a 10-year-old girl living in the suburbs of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; in 1991 he was a gay man dying of AIDS in San Francisco.

—Steyerl (1999, p. 62)

As I grew older my conflict became more explicit to me, and I began to feel that I was living a falsehood. I was in masquerade, my female reality, which I had no words to define, clothed in a male pretense.

—Morris (1974, p. 16)

"For every woman who burned her bra, there is a man ready to wear one," says Veronica Vera, who founded Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to Be Girls in 1992 as a resource for the estimated three to five percent of the adult male population that feels the need, at least occasionally, to dress in women's clothing.

—Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to Be Girls (n.d., 2)

"Have you ever wanted to dress as a man, try on a male guise and enter the male domain," asks Torr in the ads for her "Drag King For A Day" workshops. A stream of housewives, artists, straight, lesbian, young and old, sign up for Torr's classes. The first thing Torr tells them is to "stop apologizing," then over one afternoon they learn how to construct a penis, bind their breasts, sit with their legs open and "take up space." They then have to go to a bar to put it all into practice.

—Cooper (1998)

These fragments, chosen fairly randomly, illustrate a little (but only a very little) of the complex and diverse nature of the human experiences that today are considered together under the heading of "transgender." Although this term has been used in other ways (Ekins & King, 1999, p. 581), transgender is most commonly used today in the extensive sense of Thom and More (1998): to encompass "the community of all self identified cross gender people whether intersex, transsexual men and women, cross dressers, drag kings
and drag queens, transgenderists, androgynous, bi-gendered, third gendered or as yet unnamed gender gifted people." (p. 3). Until recently, a sharp distinction was made between transvestites, transsexuals, and others who appeared to be conscious with their assigned sex, and those people who were born with intersexed bodies. Now people with intersexed bodies, as in the encompassing definition of Thorn and More (1998), are often included—and sometimes include themselves—under the umbrella term of transgender, especially where the term "transgender" has a transgressive connotation.

In addition to emphasizing diversity, the concept of "transgender," emerging out of the transgender community itself, has avoided assumptions of pathology inherent in the discourse of transvestism, transsexualism, gender identity disorder, and gender dysphoria generated by the medical profession. It also allows consideration of a gender phenotype that has not been subjected to the medical gaze.

We prefer the gerund "transgendering" because of its focus not on types of people but on social process. Transgendering refers to the idea of moving across (transferring) from one perspective to another (temporarily or permanently), to the idea of living in between genders, and to the idea of transcending or living "Beyond gender" altogether (Ekins & King, 1999, 2001b). In the context of this book, it is most usefully viewed as a social process in which males renounce or suspend the masculinity that is expected of them and females (unexpectedly) embrace it.

In the mid-1970s, when we began to research this area, the literature was comparatively small and we could be reasonably confident that we were at least aware of it all. The relevant sections in Bullough, Dorr Legg, Elcano, and Kepner's bibliography (1976) contain about 450 references. More recent bibliographies demonstrate the growth in the literature since that time. Demeny's (1992) bibliography, particularly strong on medical material, and Denny's (1994) bibliography, particularly strong on medical and psychological literature, each include more than 5,000 entries. The growth in the literature since 1994 has been rapid. The literature has increased in size, but it also now ranges across a large number of disciplines and fields of study. In the mid-1970s, the bulk of the literature came from medicine and psychology. Now, although these disciplines are still dominant, much can also be found coming from sociology (Devel, 1997; Ekins, 1997; King, 1993), social anthropology (Ramas, 1996), social history (Meyerowitz, 2002), law (Sharpe, 2002), lesbian and gay studies (Prosser, 1997), women's studies (Maidland, 1986), and (especially in recent years) cultural studies (Garber, 1992). In addition, transgender topics appear regularly in the popular media, on television, in the cinema, in the press, and, of course, on the Internet. There are transgender plays and novels, there is transgender photography, and there is transgender art and transgender pornography. Trans people themselves have written their autobiographies, formed organizations, and produced magazines, bulletins, and guides and to celebrations of the topics. During the 1990s, in particular, a number of openly trans people made significant contributions to the academic literature (e.g., More & Whitle, 1999).

In all this material, concepts of masculinity and femininity and what it means to be a man or woman are omnipresent but usually taken for granted. Often, the transgender literature makes sense only against an implicit backdrop composed of commonly shared ideas about masculinity and femininity and related conceptions of what it means to be a man or woman. Only sometimes is the searchlight turned onto this backdrop. Similarly, although there are occasional references to transgender in the masculinity literature (Connell, 1995; Petersen, 1998), this latter literature has largely ignored the area of transgender.

It is not possible in a single chapter to cover all aspects of transgendering, and here our focus is on transgenderism in contemporary Western societies, which has been the focus of the bulk of the academic literature. It is with the assumption that the conceptual apparatus of transvestite, transsexual, and transgender has originated. A small but growing literature does, however, exist on "transgender-related phenomena in non-Western cultures. Most of this has focused on Noughts and Crosses, androgynous, androgynous, androgynous, androgynous, androgynous people in recent years. The relation between androgynous, androgynous, androgynous, androgynous, androgynous people may have acquired the "real reality" of what now came to be conceptualized as psychological sex—"gender identity."—was privileged over the "apparent reality" of the body—morphological sex. The modern "transsexual" was "invented." Although it is possible to cite examples of the phenomenon of transgender throughout human history, the roots of our modern conception of transgenderism are to be found in the latter half of the 19th century. This period saw the beginning of what Foucault terms the "medicalization of the sexually peculiar" (Foucault, 1979, p. 44). It was during this period that psychiatrists and other medical practitioners began to pursue the nature of people who reported that they felt liked/dressed as he/she like a person of the "opposite sex."
Early manifestations of what later came to be seen as transgenderism were first seen as variations of homosexuality. "Real" men were masculine traits; women, who were homoeosexual were not "real men" and often were conceptualized as feminine souls in male bodies. Men who enjoyed behaving and dressing as women or, indeed, wished to be women, simply took the whole business much further! It was Hirschfeld (1910/1991) who coined the term "transvestite" for this latter group. In doing so, he argued that the transvestites' love of the feminine did not make them women. Rather, they were men who enjoyed expressing femininity. Hirschfeld redelineate the link between being a man and masculinity. He argued that men (and women) are variously masculine and feminine.

There are men with the gentle emotions of a Marie Baskierschewitz, with feminine loveliness and modesty, with predominant reproductive gifts, with an almost unconscious tendency to feminine occupations such as cleaning and cooking, also such ones who live women behind in vanity, coquetry, love of gossip, and cowardice, and there are women who greatly outweigh the average man in energy and generosity, such as Christine of Sweden, in being abstact and having depth, such as Sonja Kowalewsky, as many modern women in the men's world. Transvestism is the question of whether (and, if so, on what grounds) men should be allowed to renounce and be assisted in renouncing their male bodies (and, to a lesser extent, women their female bodies) to come to the fore.

By implication, stable "transvestites" are not "less men." In a similar way, Hirschfeld argued that denouncing masculinity did not necessarily involve homosexuality: "one has to extend the sentence 'not all homosexuals are effeminate' to include 'not all transvestites are homosexual'" (1910/1991, p.148). Later, he wrote that "today we are in a position to say that transvestism is a condition that occurs independently and must be considered separately from any other sexual anomaly" (Hirschfeld, 1938, pp.188-189). Hans Ehrlich also saw what he preferred to call coni (Ehrlich, 1928) as separate from homosexuality, although he had a more conventional belief than Hirschfeld in the biologically given and fundamentally different (but complementary) natures of men and women (Ellis, 1914).

Both Hirschfeld and Ellis were broadly supportive of those who would later be distin, guished as transvestites and transsexuals (they did not employ the then fashionable language of degeneracy or perversion), but they nevertheless viewed such people as anomalies to be explained within a medical framework. They agreed that the transvestites' love of the feminine did not make them women. Rather, they were men who enjoyed expressing femininity. Hirschfeld redelineate the link between being a man and masculinity. He argued that men (and women) are variously masculine and feminine.

In addition to stressing the independence of sex and gender, the writings of Money (1973), Stoller, and others also stressed the immutability of the latter when conceptualized as "gender identity." What became referred to as "core gender identity" (Stoller, 1977) was regarded as unalterable after the age of 2 or 3, thus attaining a degree of "reality" comparable to that of the body. This conceptions, therefore, it became possible to be both a man in terms of the body and a female in terms of the psyche or, indeed, vice versa. Thus, a person may have male-to-female transsexual patients claimed that the following sentences: "Their anatomical sex, that is to say, the body, is male. Their psychological sex, that is to say, the mind, is female" (Benjamin, 1966, p.66). Despite the separation, there was still an assumption that, as Stoller put it, "masculinity fits well with maleness and femininity goes with femaleness" (1977, p.173) so that a "fully differentiated gender identity" is immutable, it makes sense to achieve harmony by altering the body to the extent that technological developments allow. Money and Tucker write of the transsexual as a person whose sex organs differentiated as male and whose gender identity differentiated as female. Medical science has found ways to reduce the incompatibility between anatomy and sex to a minimum. Surgery and hormone treatment are used to make the sex organs identical to the opposite sex, and to make the body appear to be a male or female. But the psychological changes that have taken place are not sufficient to make the person feel like a member of the opposite sex. Thus, the person may experience a sense of being a misfit, a "transsexual" fittingly described by Hamburger, Stoller, and Dahlverson (1953), was there "no desire for sexual relations with men" and "no evidence of any maternal instinct" (Ostow, 1953, p.1553). Meyer and Hoopes (1974) have similarly argued that a true feminine identification, for instance, would result in warm and continued relationships with men, a sense of maturity, interest in caring for children, and the capacity to work productively and continuously in their occupation. The adult "transsexual" reaches accommodation with a simulated femininity or masculinity at a sacrifice in total personality. (p.447)

The medical approach has facilitated some degree of migration (Ekins & King, 1999) from one sex (body) to the other, but it retains a view of
of sex, sexuality, and gender as binary and has, on
the whole, accepted existing stereotypes of what
constitutes masculinity and femininity and their
linkages to male and female bodies. Thus, in
the absence (as in the case of the candidates them-
seleves) that will unequivocally
demonstrate that a person is a transsexual, suit-
ability for hormone (and especially) surgical “sex
change” is determined by the extent to which the
candidate “passes” or demonstrates sufficient masculinity or femininity, as the case may be.
Some critics (and some of the candidates them-
seleves) have complained that the conceptions of masculinity and femininity that the medical profes-
sion has employed in this respect have become
outmoded and are out of step with notions of
masculinity and femininity in “the real world.”

The second approach that we consider in the
following section also makes use of traditional
categorizations, but it locates the linkage between
sex and gender to a greater extent than the medical
approach. As with the bulk of the medical
literature on sexuality, there tends to be a
downdraughting of the details of transgender sexu-
ality (eroticism) and the relations between
“masculine” and “feminine” sexuality, as opposed
to the details of sex (the body) and gender (both
as identity and as the social and cultural accom-
paniments of sex).

THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY,
VIRGINIA PRINCE, “FULL
PERSONALITY EXPRESSION,”
AND “SUSPENDING” MASCULINITY

From the early 1960s onward, the voices of
transgendered people, themselves, began to
be heard outside the medical case histories.
The dominant voice within this total second
approach, was of those who sought to avoid
medicalization and develop a view of their
identities and behaviors in terms of their “sus-
pending” aspects of masculinity for various
reasons. (mainly) men who did not wish to
renounce their masculinity permanently but who
would sometimes suspend it by cross-dressing
and behaving “in a feminine fashion,” usually
in private but sometimes in public. This comport-
ment (as it was often experienced) was sometimes
troubling enough for some men to seek a “cure.”
The term “transvestism” came to refer prin-
cipally to compulsive and sexually arousing
cross-dressing, usually by biological males. Because a
“cure” was available (despite a brief flurry of
interest in the use of aversion therapy in the
1960s), and because the anguish of being a
transvestite and sometimes being a partner) cross-
dressing was seen as a relatively harmless “per-
version,” transvestism was of little interest
to most of the medical profession.

So it was left to transvestites themselves
to fashion an identity and a script that
was more tenable than that on offer by the medical
profession. Central to this was Virginia Prince,
who, after struggling to find a cure for her
condition, was encouraged by a psychiatrist to
“stop fighting it.” Prince went on to fashion a
new identity depicting a certain type of cross-
dressing supported by an explanatory and jus-
tificatory philosophy with which she sought to
teach the medical profession and transvestites
themselves. In doing so, she provided the basis
for the beginnings of what we now call the
transgender community.

Prince (1957, p. 82) distinguished between
two types of males who may share “the desire
to wear feminine attire.” These were the homo-
sexual, the transvestite, and the transsexual.
Prince then distinguished the homosexual and
the transvestite from what she called the “true
transvestite” (Prince, 1957, p. 84). The true
transvestites are “exclusively heterosexual . . .
frequently married and often fathers” (Prince,
1957, p. 84). “They value their male organs and
enjoy using them and do not wish to be
removed” (p. 84).

In 1960, Prince published a magazine called
Transvestia that was sold by subscription and
through adult bookshops. The message on the
inside cover read: “Transvestia is dedicated to
the observance of persons who have become aware of their ‘other side’ and seek to express it.” Gradually, Prince
developed an organization called the Foundation for
Full Personality Expression (FPE or Phi Fepsion)
that was clearly aimed at the trans-croppers who, like Prince (at that time), were heterosexual
and married—homosexuals and transsexuals
were not admitted. This organization was
immensely successful and spread to many parts of
the world.

By 1967, Prince (writing under the pseud-
ononym “Bruce”)’s book was evidently familiar
with the gender and terminology and concepts
that are taken for granted today. Sex, she points
out, is anatomical and physiological: gender is
psychosocial. Transvestism, for Prince, is very firmly
about gender. She argues that sex, the division
into male and female, is something we share with
other animals. Gender, the division of mas-
culine and feminine, is, on the other hand, “a
human invention” and “not the inevitable result
of biological necessity” (Bruce, 1967, p. 129).

But in their socialization, children are pushed in
one or the other gender direction and, conse-
fquently, anything associated with the other
gender has to be suppressed, particularly in the
case of males. Transvestism is the expression of
this suppressed femininity.

Prince’s views on the nature of masculinity and femininity are particularly apparent in her
publications aimed at instructing transvestites
themselves on how to dress and behave in order
to express the woman within. How to Be A
Woman Though Male (Prince, 1971) is a practi-
cal guide for males who wish to be women, and
this involves Prince in presenting what looks
like a very dated, traditional view of women and
men, even for its time. To be masculine is to
be active, competitive, strong, logical, and so
on; to be feminine is to be the opposite—
passive, cooperative, weak, and emotional (Prince,
1971, pp. 115-116). However, she is aware that
she is presenting a stereotype of womanhood
and writes that she agrees with the feminist crit-
icism of some aspects of it, but she argues that
this is how things are, not as they should be, and
this is why it takes a woman to be a woman in our culture

It is also, we should note, a very middle-class
stereotype of femininity: Prince tells her read-
ners, “If you are going to appear in society as a
woman, don’t just be the LADY in the crowd.
If you are a woman at all, not the scrubwoman or a
clerk. It is the beauty, delicacy, grace, loveliness, charm and freedom of expression of the feminine world that you are
seeking to experience and enjoy, so “live it up”—
be as pretty, charming and graceful as you can . . .
(Prince, 1971, p. 136)

Prince’s views are important in this context
for her insistence on breaking the link between
femininity and feminalness, and (implicitly, for
she has little to say about this) between mas-
culinity and maleness. The conception of the
woman within the man (and presumably the man
within the woman) gave a more serious edge to the emerging identity of the transvestite,
and the notion of whole persons, both masculine
and feminine, does strike a chord with some of
the visions of the past 30 or so years.

However, Prince’s apparent recognition of the cultural relativity of masculinity and femi-
ninity seems at odds with the notion of the emerging “from within” and, ultimately, Prince
Raymond argued that transsexualism is not an individual condition, a personal problem for which changing sex is merely a neutral, technical method of treatment, but instead is a social and political phenomenon. According to her, transsexuals are among the victims of patriarchal society and its definitions of masculinity and femininity. By creating transsexualism and treating it by means of sex change, the political and social sources of the ‘transsexual’ suffering are obscured. Instead, it is conceptualized as an individual problem for which an individual solution is devised.

Raymond argues that by means of this illegitimate medicalization, the ‘real’ problem remains unaddressed. Medicalization also serves to defuse the revolutionary potential of transsexuals, who are ‘deprived of an alternative framework in which to view the problem’ (1980, p. 124).

She argues that not only does transsexualism reflect the nature of patriarchal society, but it is also ultimately caused by it.

The First Cause, that which sets other causes of transsexualism in motion… is a patriarchal society, which generates norms of masculinity and femininity. Uniquely restricted by patriarchal definitions of masculinity and femininity, the transsexual becomes body-bound by them and merely rejects one and gravitates toward the other. (Raymond, 1980, p. 70)

Thus, we have a circular process by which patriarchy creates, via the family and other structures, problems for individuals that are then dealt with as transsexualism, thus reinforcing the conditions out of which the problems arose.

However, this is primarily a one-way movement, for Raymond sees transsexualism as primarily a male movement. Female-to-male transsexuals are mere tokens created to maintain the illusion that it is a ‘condition’ that affects both sexes. The reason why it is primarily a male problem, says Raymond (1980), is because men are seeking to possess the power that women have by virtue of female biology. This power, which is evident in giving birth, cannot be reduced to procreation. Rather, birthing is only representative of the many levels of creativity that women have exercised in the history of civilization. Transsexualism may be one way by which men attempt to possess female creative energies, by possessing antifemale organs. (p. xvi)

In addition, Raymond (1980) sees the creation of transsexualism and sex change surgery as an attempt to replace biological women (p. 140) and argues that ‘gender identity clinics’ where transsexuals are ‘treated’ are prototypical ‘sex-role control centers’ (p. 136). Thus, transsexualism is not merely another example of the pervasive effects of patriarchal attitudes; it actually constitutes an attack on women. ‘Transsexualism constitutes a sociopolitical program that is undercutting the movement to eradicate sex role stereotyping and oppression in this culture’ (p. 5).

Apart from measures directed at the ‘first cause’ itself (patriarchy), Raymond advocates restrictions on ‘sex change’ surgery; the presentation of others, less favorable, views of its consequences in the media; and nonexist counseling and consciousness-raising groups for transsexuals themselves to enable them to realize their radical potential (1980, appendix).

How much acceptance Raymond’s thesis has had is difficult to tell, but it clearly has been widely read and discussed. Stone (1991) writes of Raymond’s book that ‘there in 1991, on the twentieth anniversary of its publication, it is still the definitive statement on transsexualism by a genetic female academic’ (p. 281). The position of Raymond and other feminist academics was not merely ‘academic.’ In the middle and late 1970s, as Cress and Riddell explains (personal communication, 1994),

...
gain admittance to "awomen-born womyn only" spaces and the harassment they have suffered at the hands of those born "non-genetic women" (Wilchins, 1997, p. 110).

Postmodernism, "Transcending," and Breaking the Link Between Males and Masculinity

Finally, we look at the emergence, at the end of the 20th century, of a postmodern approach: the coming of age of transgenderism. Now the emphasis is on transversity, diversity, fluidity, and motion beyond the rigidity of the binary gender divide. New combinations of masculinity and femininity are celebrated. Particularly significant, from the standpoint of masculinity, is the concept of female masculinity put forward by Judith "Jack" Halberstam (1998). Whereas the vast majority of the work in masculinities literature concerns itself with varieties of masculinity considered in relation to males, Halberstam breaks that link. Furthermore, in a postmodern age, medical technology becomes something to call upon for the purpose of "optional" body modification, as opposed to "diagnosis," treatment, or management of pathology or disorder.

Virginia Prince notwithstanding, the voices of transgendered people themselves were largely missing from the earlier approaches that we have looked at; they appeared largely as cases in the medical literature or as dopes of the medical profession in the dominant feminist discourses. This was to change radically in the 1990s as a new discourse emerged, constituting a major paradigm shift. A key work in this new approach was Sandy Stone's "The Empire Strikes Back!" (1991), in which she argued that "the people who have no voice in this theorizing are the transsexuals themselves. As with males theorizing about women from the beginning of time, theorists of gender have seen transsexuals as possessing something" (1991, p. 294).

Stone also pointed out that transsexuals had failed to develop a counterculture. It is easy to see why, because the term "traditional" transsexual identity has "worked" only to the extent that they have been covert and temporary. The modern transsexual who surrenders his masculinity for varying amounts of time most usually does not want to be "read" as such. Except within a small subcultural set, he wishes to be seen as a "normal" man or (to the extent that he is able to suspend his masculinity in public) as a "normal" woman. Similarly, the male transsexual who is renouncing his masculinity permanently, like the female transsexual who is seeking to embrace it, are also seeking to be read as a woman and a man, respectively. Both identities are also temporary ones; the transvestite oscillates (Ekins & King, 1999, 2001b) between masculinity and femininity; the transsexual passes through a trans phase on the way to a permanent masculine or feminine identity.

Where these identities have become open and/or permanent, they have been seen as pathological and problematic. In other words, no permanent "in-between" identity was allowed for. To the extent that the transvestite or transsexual passes as a person of the other gender, and to the extent that the transgendering remains hidden, the "fact" of two invariant genders remains unquestioned. As Stone (1991) put it, "authentic experience is replaced by a particularly kind of story, one that supports the old constructed positions" (p. 295). In conclusion, Stone argued that transsexuals can develop their own discourse only by recognizing their unique gender position:

For a transsexual, as a transsexual, to generate a true, effective and representational countercourse is to speak from outside the boundaries of gender, be respected as constructed oppositional nodes which have been preceded by the only positions from which discourse is possible. (1991, p. 295)

Stone contended that the dominant binary model of gender and its employment in the category of transsexuality has obscured the diversity of the transsexual experience. It "foreclosed the possibility of analyzing desire and motivational complexity in a manner which adequately describes the multiple contradictions of individual lived experience" (1991, p. 297). What began to happen, in fact, during the 1990s was recognition of the vast diversity of transsexual experiences. Some people did begin questioning the necessity of passing for typically gendered people and began to develop new gender identities. For some people, "the experience of cresting or transsexuals as a strong part of their gender identity" being out of the closet is part of that expression (Nataf, 1996, p. 16).

The following quotation from Denny (1995) underscores the point of diversity:

With the new way of looking at things, suddenly all sorts of options have opened up for transgerndered people: living full-time without genital surgery, recreating one's role while working in another, identifying as neither gender, or both, blending...characteristics of different genders in new and creative ways, identifying as genders and sexes heretofore dreamed of—even designer genitals do not seem beyond reason. (p. 1)

The 1995 International Bill of Gender Rights (reprinted in Feinberg, 1996, pp. 171-175) claims that "all human beings have the right to define their own gender identity"..."to free expression of their self-defined gender identity," and to change "their bodies cosmically, chemically, or surgically, so as to express a self-defined gender identity" (pp. 172-173). California (1997), too, writes of the "individual's right to own his or her own body, and to make whatever temporary or permanent changes to that body the individual pleases...A new sort of transgendered person has emerged, one who approaches the transgendered with the same mindset that they would obtaining a piercing or a tattoo" (p. 224).

However, at the same time as there is an acknowledgment of diversity, there has also developed a greater sense of unity. Writers now comment on the "transgender community," and this is sometimes seen to extend into the gay community (Mackenzie, 1994; Whittle, 1996). Parts of this community have been working more vociferously and more effectively than ever before to end discrimination toward, and claims which are described as the rights of, transgendered people. The emphasis has shifted to the rights of transgendered people as transgendered, and not as members of their new "gender." A particular focus of this activism has been the advocacy of the right of "gender expression" subversive of masculine/feminine dichotomies as linked to "male" and "female" bodies.

Stone's (1991) chapter can also be seen to provide the starting point for the emergence of transgender theory, which is now seen by some to be at the very cutting edge of debates about sex, sexuality, and gender and has achieved a position of prominence as a number of recent contributions to cultural studies and queer theory. Stone's image of transsexuals as "outside the boundaries of gender" chimed in well with many of the themes in cultural studies and queer theory and provided a motif that has been much developed since.

This idea points to the position of trans people as located somewhere outside the spaces customarily offered to men and women, as people who are beyond the laws of gender. So the assumption that there are only two (opposite) genders, with their corresponding "masculinities" and "femininities," is opened up to scrutiny. Instead, it is suggested that there is the possibility of a "third" space, a place outside the gender dichotomy. This idea is not simply to the addition of another category; it is conceived as a "space for someone articulate and make sense of all its various gender identities" (Nataf, 1996, p. 57), or, as Herli (1994) put it, "the third is emblematic of other possible combinations that transcend dimorphism" (p. 20).

Within this approach, the idea of permanent core identities and the idea of gender itself disappear. The emphasis is on transience, fluidity, and performance. Kate Bornstein, for instance, talks about "the ability to freely and knowingly become one or many of a limitless number of genders for any length of time, at any rate of change" (Bornstein, 1994, p. 52). In that gender fluidity recognizes no borders or "laws" of gender, the claim is to live "outside of gender" (Whittle, 1996) as "gender outliers" (Bornstein, 1994).

Writing at the beginning of the 1990s, Rubin pointed out that "transgender demographics are changing. FTMs [female-to-males] still comprise a fraction of the transsexual population, but their numbers are growing and awareness of their presence is increasing" (1992, p. 475). Conveniently written off as "tokens" by Raymond, female-to-male transsexuals or, more accurately, female-bodied trans persons, indeed had become a more visible feature of the transgender community by the end of the 20th century and leading into the 21st century. In fact, they have come to play key roles within that community and within transgender politics, and they have been prominent in the emergence of transgender theory (e.g., Crenshaw, 1995; Proster, 1998, Whittle, 1996). More specifically, it is this third gender who has led the way in linking transgender to revolutionary socialism (Feinberg, 1996), to radical lesbianism (Nataf, 1996), to radical body configurations and pansexualism (Volkano, 2000), and to the
begnings of a bi-historic negated transgender approach to class, race, and masculinity (Volcano & Halberstam, 1999). In the main, followers of Raymond such as Jeffreys (1996) have continued to turn a blind eye to the significance of FTMs within the transgender community. Notably, it is Judith "Jack" Halberstam who has turned the spotlight onto "female masculinity" or "masculinity without men (Halberstam, 1998), thus avoiding the limitations of seeing masculinity as "a synonym for men and male-ness" (Halberstam, 1998, p. 13). Halberstam's main aims are to demonstrate that women have historically contributed to the construction of contemporary masculinity and to underline the diversity of female masculinity, which has been obscured because it challenges "mainstream definitions of male masculinity as non-performative" (Hall-bertzam, 1998, p. 234).

**Concluding Comments**

The "lessons" of transgender for masculinity and femininity are complex and often contradictory. They revolve around the nature of the and the relationships between sex, gender, and sexuality. The binary divisions in each of these areas have given way to diversity, and the simple linkages between women and men have given way to complexity. Not surprisingly, much academic and popular discussion has focused on the most dramatic aspect of transgender, that of transsexualism. Against a backdrop of the assumed correlation of sex, gender, and heterosexuality, radical reconfiguring of the body has been conventionally sanctioned by the medical profession after the demonstration by the "applicant" that the applicant is "out of sync" with the applicant's gender and sexuality, thereby restoring harmony. Recent thinking has upset that harmony.

The early attempts by Hirschfeld and Ellis to distinguish transvestism or cosiness from homosexuality and Prince's insistence on the gendered nature of transvestism led to an underplaying of the significance of transsexualism. The diversity of transgender sexual experiences evident in the early medical literature was gradually replaced by a "heteronormative" perspective in which those transsexuals who took steps to change their bodies to match their perceived identity on the "opposite" side of the binary divide, and who took up a heterosexual position from the vantage point of this "opposite" side, were privileged over transsexualized people who evidenced other forms of transgender experience. This heteronormative position that privileges heterosexuality, as set within a binary male and female gender divide, over other forms of sexual and gender expression, may be illustrated by Benjamin's (1968) statement:

"Transsexuals are attracted only to members of their own anatomical sex; however, they cannot be called homosexual because they feel they belong to the sex opposite to that of the chosen partner. The transsexual man loves another man as a woman does, quite his phenotype and in spite of his genital apparatus which he feels he must change. The transsexual woman woe another woman as a man would, feeling herself to be a man regardless of her anatomical structure." (p. 249)

It was not until 1984 that Dorothy Clare coined the term "transsexualism" (Clare, 1984) in recognition of the fact that the "transsexual"'s remuneration was not necessary mean renouncing sexual attraction to women and that embracing masculinity did not necessarily entail embracing women as sexual partners (see also Feinblom, Fleming, Kliewer, & Schulte, 1976). More recently, through the popularization of the term "transgender," (e.g., 1989) by Anne Lawrence (1999) and Michael Bailey (2003) (see Ekins & King, 2001c), the recognition of a sexual motivation for sex reassignment has occurred. This literature highlights the complex interrelations between "masculine" and "feminine" transgendered sexuality insofar as many self-identified male-to-female transsexuals are committed to renouncing many elements of their masculinity, but paradoxically this desire for permanent renunciation derives from a sexuality that is in important respects stereotypically masculine. Significantly, Lawrence (1999) refers to such male-to-female transsexuals as "Men Trapped in Men's Bodies." The key concept here is "auto-agnostiphilia" (love of oneself as a woman). As Lawrence puts it (personal communication, 2001), "I renounced a masculine sexed body and for the most part renounced masculine gender behavior, in an attempt to both express and control my (masculine) autogynephilic sexuality. Paradoxically, the control aspect also involved a renunciation of masculine sexuality, at least in part."

Similarly, the straightforward dichotomy of male and female bodies is also breached by recent developments. Transvestites altered their bodies only in temporary or reversible ways; transsexuals were either pre- or post-op, and post-op meant that the body had been reconfigured and therefore as possible the "normal" body that "fitted" the gender identity. The only limits were those imposed by cost or technical limitations. Now some people are not going "all the way" and are choosing to reconfigure their bodies in ways that are not "standard" male or female. Virginia Prince, radical in some ways and clearly ahead of her time, might not be happy with the sexual implications in the following quotation, but she would otherwise, we feel, approve:

"If a man says he loves me, he'd better love all of me. Ain't no part of me that ain't me. Ain't no part of me that's bad. I am an African American heterosexual woman who is transsexualized with a penis... A man either love all of me or none of me. And I mean ALL of me. (quoted in Griggs, 1999, p. 91)

Another example of body diversity is that of those people born with intersexed bodies who have been (and often still are) surgically and hormonally fitted into one or the other category as normal in their lives as possible. Now, increas- ingly, people with intersexed bodies who were neither aware of nor able to control such surgical and hormonal intervention are questioning those practices and demanding the right to determine whether, and in how their bodies should be treated. Virginia (1998; Kessler, 1998).

As we explained earlier, it was the primacy given to gender and specifically gender identity that gave legitimacy to the efforts of the medical profession to change the sex of those seeking to change. By and large, only two gender identities were "allowed": masculine and feminine. Again the dichotomy is being questioned, as there is emerging a diversity of identities "in between" or even "outside" the conventional parameters. Members of the medical profession—health professionals and therapists, who have begun to look at their patients or clients in less dichoto- mous ways. Bockting and Coleman, for example, wrote that their clients "often have a more ambiguous gender identity and are more ambivalent about a gender role transition than they initially admit" (1992, p. 143). Their treatment program allows their clients, they say, to "discover and express their unique identity" (1992, p. 143) and "allows for individuals to identify as neither man nor woman, but as someone whose identity transcends the culturally sanctioned dichotomy" (1992, p. 144).

We leave the final word to Jason Cromwell, who expresses the idea clearly when he says that "there is more to gender diversity than being transvestite or transsexual... there are more than two sexes or genders" (Cromwell, 1997, p. 6). By the same token, there is more to Men and Masculinities Studies than men and masculinities. Therein lies the particular contribution of transgendering to the field.

**References**


Bruce, V. (1967). The expression of femininity in the male. Journal of Sex Research, 3(2), 129-139.


